

February 17, 2017

Appropriations Committee  
State of Connecticut  
Legislative Office Building, Room 2C  
Hartford, CT 06106

**Testimony on H.B. 7027 AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE THIRTIETH 2019, AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.**

Good Evening Senator Formica, Senator Osten, Representative Walker and other members of the committee:

My name is Osbert Ingram. I reside in New Haven and I am a member of the New Haven Works. I migrated to the United States from Jamaica and in 2005 came to live in New Haven. It was very difficult to find a good job so I resorted to doing odd jobs as a warehouse worker, security officer and as a construction-site laborer. For some of these jobs, I traveled as far as Stamford, Portland and Manchester on a daily basis – but I felt like I was stuck – piecing together jobs and barely making ends meet. Despite my knowledge experience and qualifications in different fields like corrections, law enforcement, and security, I could not get a good job. Despite having been a supervisor for a large security company, a supervisor of Marine Corps Exchange in Guantanamo Bay, and having a certificate in Family Life Education from the University of the West Indies, I still had difficulty finding work in my field for which I was qualified. I began to think that it was me – that I was doing something wrong.

Then I learned about New Haven Works and became a member. In less than six months they referred me to a job with the New Haven Parking Authority. New Haven Works didn't just help me to find a job, but my job coach worked tirelessly in preparing me to face a competitive job market with confidence. The Expectations 4 Employment Workshop at New Haven Works helped me improve the way I present myself to employers. My experience with New Haven Works was like attending a business school with dedicated staff assisting me to present my experience and qualifications in a far more effective way. And I saw the difference, employers – good employers – responded. One year later, New Haven Works referred me to a second job at Yale University. I am presently working in a permanent full-time position making a good salary. For me, New Haven Works has been a door of opportunity – one that I want to ensure will be open to many more New Haven residents to come.

Thank you.